

Recommendations for 2003-2005

1. Analyze baseline data, including exemplary practices, to determine priorities for system-wide improvements.

The greatest opportunity to strengthen the public health system will come from joining efforts across local jurisdictions, working in concert with the state Department of Health. Data from the baseline study will help public health leaders select and focus on the most important opportunities for improvement.

2. Adopt a schedule and process to support regular use of *Standards for Public Health in Washington State* to evaluate and describe the status of Washington's public health system.

The baseline data will help us take action to improve the system now, but real progress will depend on consistent follow-up, over time. The Standards Committee recommends measurement by independent consultants at intervals of about three years, with self-assessment during intervening years.

3. Continue to develop the description of needed administrative capability, and field test and revise it for use in future system-wide evaluation processes.

Administrative standards address the infrastructure needed for public health agencies to carry out their mission. A set of standards has been developed that address basic requirements such as accounting, technology support, and personnel policies. Once tested, these can be included in future assessments of the public health system.

4. Link the work of the PHIP Standards Committee with that of the Finance Committee, Key Health Indicators Committee, and other committees to assure that actions guiding public health system improvement will yield maximum efficiency in performance and effectiveness.

The PHIP committee chairs meet regularly to exchange information, coordinate work plans, and set complementary goals. This important process has become one way we shape Washington's public health system and should continue.